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HAZARDOUS WASTE MGMT. DIV.

TO: 6H DATE: 9-19-90

*Intro
HP*
In further response to your ^{concern} letter regarding the remedies propose. for the ask Sup Sites, I am pleased to provide addition info.

CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY

PLEASE EXPEDITE

INSTRUCTIONS: PREPARE FINAL FOR SIGNATURE OF: Robert E. Layton Jr., P. E.
Regional Administrator

9421602



RETURN TO CHARLOTTE HEROD BY CLOSE OF BUSINESS:

Jim
9-25-90

Committee on Public Works and Transportation

One Hundred First Congress
U.S. House of Representatives

Glenn M. Anderson, Chairman

Room 2165, Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, DC 20515

TELEPHONE: AREA CODE 202, 225-4472

September 14, 1990

JOHN PAUL HAMMERSCHMIDT, ARKANSAS
RANKING REPUBLICAN MEMBER

904080
RC
SW
AR
OW
Quinn
RA

Ms. Ellen Greeney
Community Relations Coordinator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (6H-MC)
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733

Dear Ms. Greeney:

The Arkwood Superfund site in Omaha, Arkansas, is located within my district. I have followed the course of the Arkwood site's progress with strong interest. Until recently, the predominant attitude among the affected constituents seemed to be general interest in seeing the final results of the site studies, mixed with a small dose of frustration over the length of time consumed by the Agency Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study process. Recently, however, constituent attitudes have changed dramatically.

On July 16, 1990, EPA Region VI released a proposed plan which calls for on-site incineration of all of the affected materials at the Arkwood site. This proposal for on-site incineration of all affected materials came as quite a shock to my constituents and me. It is my understanding that EPA personnel had stated in a public meeting in February 1990, only a few months before announcement of the Agency's proposed plan, that there was very little chance of on-site incineration being proposed for the site.

I was home in my district during the Labor Day recess. During this visit, many of my constituents contacted me and expressed concern over the proposal for total on-site incineration. It is my impression that local opposition has grown steadily since the public meeting. The local concerns have focused, in particular, on the fact that the Arkwood site is located in a valley just below a public school which serves both the city of Omaha and the surrounding unincorporated areas. Now that the school year has begun, I expect that opposition to on-site incineration will mount further.

9/18/90

It is important for you to realize that the opposition to EPA's plan for on-site incineration includes virtually all of the leaders and public officials in the local area. Resolutions have been adopted by the Omaha City Council and the Boone County Quorum Court. Petitions have circulated within the community, all opposing the plan for on-site incineration. Enclosed are copies of several representative news clippings and a letter from the Omaha School District expressing concern with the plan. What the residents and local leaders seem to be saying is that EPA should reconsider its proposed plan and, at a minimum, further explore every available alternative before subjecting the community to a lengthy program of hazardous waste incineration just down the hillside from the town of Omaha and the local public school.

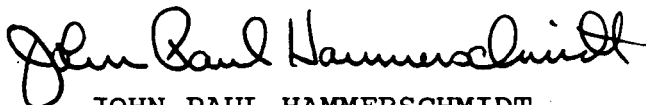
EPA's Proposed Plan of Action indicates that concern about risks posed by possible sink-hole formation led to rejection of some of the on-site land disposal options and a decision to support on-site incineration. Certainly, I understand this concern. However, I and the citizens of the area are also concerned about risks of contamination associated with incinerator operation, particularly in the event of a failure in the operation of this complex technology. We want to be certain that other land disposal options, perhaps at nearby sites where there is a lower threat of sink-hole formation, should be fully evaluated.

I believe that my constituents' requests for reconsideration of EPA's proposed plan and for further evaluation of alternatives to on-site incineration are reasonable. I ask that this letter and the enclosures be made a part of the formal public record regarding the remedy selection for the Arkwood site. I also ask for your assurance that the essentially unanimous views of my constituents be accommodated to the maximum extent allowed by the applicable laws and regulations and to the extent consistent with the health and safety of the community.

Your assistance in this matter would be very much appreciated.

With highest regards,

Sincerely,



JOHN PAUL HAMMERSCHMIDT
Member of Congress

JPH:grc
Enclosures

on Daily Times Tuesday

113 years of continuous service to North Arkansas

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HARRISON, ARKANSAS—SEPTEMBER 11, 1990

Page 25



Staff Photos/Robert E. Murphy Jr.



Boone JPs Adopt MMI Resolution

By Jeff Dezort
Of the Times Staff

The Boone County Quorum Court went on record Monday night to oppose the Environmental Protection Agency's plan to incinerate contaminated soils at the Omaha Superfund Site.

The resolution, prepared after last month's visit by Frank Conner, president of Mass Merchandisers Inc., supports the company's cleanup plan over EPA's incineration plan.

Conner told the JPs that the EPA's proposal is the "most extreme and expensive method it could have taken."

The EPA has proposed a \$16 million plan under which all soil contaminated by pentachlorophenol and dioxin be incinerated over a period of two years at the former wood treating plant. MMI would bear the full cost of the cleanup.

Mass Merchandisers, which once operated the plant, has countered with a \$4.1 million plan in which the most heavily contaminated soil should be shipped out for incineration and the rest would be piled together on the site and covered with a multi-layer cap.

The EPA is accepting public comment on the plan until Sept. 14, and EPA won't announce a final decision on a cleanup method until it considers comments from the public. Any comments to EPA should be sent to Ellen Greeney, Superfund Community Relations Coordinator, U.S. EPA — Region 6, 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Tex. 75202-2733.

JP Dr. W.P. Ashford reiterated Monday his concerns that EPA could make the site a regional toxic waste incineration point as it is located along the Union Pacific railway. Concerns have also been voiced about the site's close proximity to the Omaha school.

In the only other vote taken during the 30-minute session, the court approved an appropriation ordinance releasing \$879 for the county's participation in the Downtown Harrison Association's Christmas light program and \$1,300 for the transport and rental storage of voting machines recently purchased by the county's Election Commission.

The Downtown Association recently contracted with Dallas

is \$2,370.50, with each build owner participating. The company was in Harrison Monday.

Treasurer Ben Dodson reported that the county general fund balance is \$25,000.

(See Boone on Page 25)

Birds' Roosts Rile Citizens

Thousands of black birds coming to roost in the trees and bushes on Kimes Hill in a northeastern section of Harrison have gone on long enough, and residents have asked the city for some relief.

Mayor Dan Harness contacted the U.S. Department of Agriculture and was put in touch with Jeff Jones of the Division of Animal Damage Control. Jones will be in Harrison Thursday afternoon to demonstrate methods of shooting the birds by using non-lethal weapons.

The explosive racket employed by Jones may also alarm neighbors when he gets to business about an hour before dark. Authorities may have to carry out the procedure for several evenings before the problem is remedied.

Dorothy Jones, a north 3rd street residence, said the black birds have made their presence known for over a month. They come to the area to roost about 30 minutes before sundown. Besides the noise, neighbors are sick of having to clean the bird droppings from their vehicles and patios.

The birds have visited the area the past three years, but never in such numbers, Jones said. They have reportedly inhabited the hillside from Washington avenue eastward to the area near Silver Valley Road.

Three Youths Questioned

Home Owned
Independent
Evening
Newspaper

Harrison Daily Times

Thursday

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VOLUME 114—NO 213

HARRISON, ARKANSAS—JULY 26, 1990

25¢

No Local Support for Arkwood Site Incineration

By Ginger Shiras
Of the Times Staff

The federal Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to burn contaminated soil at the Arkwood Superfund site near Omaha for two years drew mild opposition from three neighbors Wednesday and "adamant" opposition from Mass Merchandisers, Inc., which stands to receive the \$18 million cleanup tab.

The former wood treatment plant is contaminated with pentachlorophenol and low levels of dioxin and the EPA wants to incinerate more than 20,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil.

The EPA won't announce a final decision on a clean-up method until it considers comments from Wednesday's public hearing and

written comments that it receives by Aug. 15.

The hearing at the Omaha Schools Wednesday was attended by about 50 persons.

Omaha Mayor Jake Arnold said residents were concerned that incinerator "fumes will filter up here to the school and we don't feel safe with that."

Leroy Edwards and Charles Dugan agreed.

Mass Merchandisers President Frank Conner said his company, which last operated the plant and has paid for contamination studies, would run water lines from the Omaha water system to Arkwood area residents as fast as possible.

He said it would also monitor New Cricket Spring as the company and the EPA had agreed.

But he said the company's \$4.1 million plan for off-site incineration of the most contaminated soil and putting the rest under a multi-layer cap on the site was "just as effective" as the \$18 million EPA plan.

"In our experts' opinion, the additional millions that would be spent under EPA's proposal would not provide any extra protection for human health or the environment of the Omaha community," he said.

"We are concerned about the effects on the community from operating a hazardous waste incinerator at the site," he added.

"This schoolhouse is just up the hillside from the old treating plant," Conner said. "We all know how the valleys in this area can fill with smoke."

Garry Bondy of the EPA said there was a

"misconception" about how much smoke would result from the incineration.

There will be "very little" air contamination after the material is burned and the resulting gases are returned and further filtered, he said.

He said the air would be monitored at the site and at the school during incineration.

Rose Birmingham asked who would pay her city water bill since she now can't use her wells. Bondy said the EPA would "go back to the office and discuss who would pay."

Gene Turney asked if the cleanup would provide jobs for local residents. Bondy said staffing would be governed by Superfund cleanup regulations.

Turney also asked how long it would be before the cleanup started.

Bondy replied that it was "typically on the order of years" after the EPA selects a cleanup method before the agency reaches an agreement with the "potentially responsible parties" and the cleanup begins.

Arkwood, owned by Hallie Ormond and operated by Ormond and his son-in-law, Jim Grisham, began treating wood at the site in the early 1960s.

In 1973, Mass Merchandisers leased it and continued to operate it until 1984. In 1985, the EPA added the site to its Superfund program and cleanup studies began.

When McKesson Corp. bought Mass Merchandisers, it announced that it had agreed to pay up to \$2-million and set aside an additional 88,000 shares of McKesson stock to help cover "environmental liabilities" from Arkwood.

Omaha Board Says Against Incineration

OMAHA — The Omaha School Board voted unanimously at its board meeting Monday night, Aug. 20, to oppose the EPA's on-site incineration of contaminants at the Arkwood site.

Board members said they felt that the burning of hazardous materials only one-fourth mile southwest of Omaha school and the town of Omaha may not be the proper solution for cleanup of the site.

Superintendent David Land noted that the Arkwood site is "downwind from the school, thus burning this material for two years would certainly cause the smoke and some pollutants to reach the school and citizens of Omaha."

It was stressed that the board is not opposing the cleanup but only feels that other methods should be explored more thoroughly before such a decision is made.

Land said they felt that other alternatives might include soil washing onsite or removing the contaminated dirt from the area.

The board instructed the superintendent to write the EPA, Cong. John Paul Hammerschmidt, Sen. David Pryor and Sen. Dale Bumpers and inform them of their opposition to incineration at the Arkwood site.

The board also encouraged patrons in the Omaha district to write letters and sign petitions opposing incineration. Concerned persons may pick up or sign a petition at the Omaha school office.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Don Young, President
Lanny Fausett, Vice President
Joy Fong, Secretary
Tony Barnes
Terry Roe

OMAHA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Box 249
Omaha, Arkansas 72662-0249
Telephone:
(501) 426-3366

AUG 27 1990

654

Dr. David E. Land
Superintendent

Randy Center
Secondary Principal

John L. Barron
Elementary Principal

August 21, 1990

Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt
2207 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
United States House of Representative
Washington, D.C. 20515

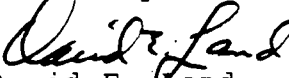
Dear Congressman Hammerschmidt:

I am writing you to express the concerns of the Omaha School board to the Environmental Protection Agency's proposal to incinerate the contaminants at the Arkwood site. The board voted unanimously to oppose this solution. They feel that other alternatives should be explored before this final decision is made.

The Arkwood site is located only one-quarter mile southwest and down wind from the Omaha School and the town of Omaha. Burning of this material so close to the school and community would surely cause smoke and some pollutants to reach these locations. There must be other alternatives such as soil washing on site or removing the contaminated dirt from the area that would be more suitable in this situation.

We are requesting your assistance, along with Senator David Pryor and Senator Dale Bumpers, to study this EPA proposal on behalf of the students and patrons of the Omaha School District.

Sincerely,


David E. Land
Superintendent

DEL:dd

cc: Ellen D. Greeney
Community Relations Coordinator
U.S.E.P.A.

Senator Dale Bumpers

Senator David Pryor

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AUG 31 1990

PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE